



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **District Man Pleads Guilty in Bus-Driving Episode - Defendant Operated, Then Crashed Metrobus -**

WASHINGTON - William Jackson, 19, pled guilty today to a criminal charge stemming from an incident July 9, 2010, in which he illegally operated a Metrobus. Jackson, of the District, pled guilty in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to unauthorized use of a vehicle, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

The Honorable Frederick H. Weisberg, who accepted the plea, scheduled sentencing for Nov. 8, 2010. Jackson faces a maximum of five years in prison and a fine of up to \$1,000.

According to a factual proffer presented at the plea hearing, Jackson entered the Metro Transit Bladensburg Bus Division, located at 2251 26<sup>th</sup> Street, NE, on July 9, 2010 wearing a Metrobus operator's uniform. He then boarded and operated a Metrobus, driving on public streets, picking up and dropping off patrons, and allowing the passengers to believe that he was a bus driver employed by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

With passengers on board, Jackson attempted to make a turn on 17<sup>th</sup> Street SE, and collided with a tree on the side of the street, ultimately causing approximately \$15,000 in damage to the bus. After the crash, he attempted to leave the scene, and took off the bus operator's shirt. Jackson was stopped by Metro Transit Police a short distance from the bus's location and taken into custody.

Jackson was not employed by the transit authority, and at no time was he given permission to take, use, or operate a Metro Bus. He did not possess a valid commercial driver's license.

Judge Weisberg ordered the defendant to stay away from any WMATA bus lots and not to wear a WMATA uniform.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of the Metro Transit Police,

particularly Detective Jeff Miller, Detective Michael Morehouse, and Officer Millard Shum, who investigated the case. He also cited the work of officers from the Metropolitan Police Department, who were first to respond to the scene, and Assistant United States Attorney Lara Worm, who prosecuted the case.

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